

maintains this rejection on the basis of there being insufficient antecedent basis for the limitation "the fibrous material" in claim 25. Applicants have therefore amended claim 25 to substitute "the fiber" for this limitation, which has appropriate antecedent basis in claim 1 and therefore is not new matter. Applicants respectfully submit that this overcomes the rejection and request withdrawal of same.

Claims 16 and 20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. The Examiner maintains this rejection on the basis that there is insufficient antecedent support for the limitation "the interrupted band" in line 2 of each of these claims. Both of claims 16 and 20 are indirectly dependent on claim 1, which at line 6 refers to "said band being interrupted across the length thereof". This language, it is respectfully submitted, provides appropriate and sufficient antecedent support for the limitations forming the basis of the rejection of claims 16 and 20. Applicants therefore traverse the rejection of these claims and request its withdrawal as inappropriate.

Applicants invention is directed to a constraining band, a container assembly including the constraining band, a barrier unit, a blast resistant container assembly, and an improved container assembly, all of which have fibrous loops or knuckles for connection. The fibrous loops form an integral part of the adjacent surface. At least about 50 weight percent of the fiber component comprises substantially continuous lengths of fiber oriented in the hoop direction of the loops. These loops in combination with a connecting pin can withstand tremendous pressures and resist pulling apart, due to the strength characteristics and orientation of the fibers. This is not found anywhere in the prior art. There is absolutely no suggestion of same.

Claims 1-6, 8-13, 16, 17, 20-23, 25-31 and 34 stand rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Lewis (U.S. 0,674,009) in view of Kolom (U.S. 5,054,635) and Prevorsek et al. (U.S. 5,545,455). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection and request its withdrawal. These references, alone or together, neither teach nor suggest the constraining band of claims 1-6 and 8-12; the container assembly of claims 13, 16-17, 20-

23, and 25-30; or the barrier unit of claims 31 and 34, for the reasons that follow.

Lewis teaches a knockdown paper box. As the Examiner admits, Lewis fails to disclose either the pin or loops required by Applicants' invention or the materials forming the band and pin. These are at the heart of Applicants' claimed invention.

Kolom, as the Examiner states, teaches to connect two ends with a pin extending through loops in each end. Steel, aluminum, titanium or multi-strand filament are all mentioned as materials for the hinge pin. There is absolutely nothing in Kolom to suggest the use of Applicants' claimed high strength fiber as the hinge pin. Furthermore, Kolom nowhere suggests the use of fibrous loops, especially wherein at least 50 weight percent of the fiber comprises substantially continuous lengths in the hoop direction of the loops. Kolom therefore cannot meet the deficiencies of Lewis.

Prevorsek et al. discloses the use of high strength fibers to make a rigid composite that can be used to make a container. While the fibers taught by Prevorsek et al. could be used in Applicants' claimed invention, there is absolutely nothing to suggest the use of hinges, knuckles, etc., or the integral loops with a connecting pin. And even if there was a suggestion that pieces of the rigid composite could be connected with a hinge, there is nothing to suggest that the knuckles/loops of such a hinge should be formed with fiber, the orientation of the fiber, or the pin materials claimed by Applicants. As such, Prevorsek fails to meet the deficiencies of Lewis and/or Kolom.

Claims 7 and 24 stand rejected under 35 U.S. C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Lewis in view of Kolom and Prevorsek et al., as applied to claims 1 and 17 above, and further in view of Sholl. Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection and request its withdrawal for the reasons that follow.

Claim 7 depends directly from claim 1, while claim 24 indirectly depends from claim 1. Both claims should therefore be allowable for the reasons set forth above with regard to Lewis, Kolom and Prevorsek et al. Furthermore, while Sholl teaches the use of rope or cord to connect two sides of a latch, there is nothing to suggest its use in lieu of a pin for a hinge. The function of the flexible member 24 (element 22 is believed to represent a

hole) in Sholl is very different from that of a hinge pin. Member 24 of Sholl is meant to permit a large relative movement of the latch members that it connects. In Applicants' invention, however, the pin is meant to hold the loops/hinge knuckles together in a manner that resists permanently pulling apart. Sholl therefore cannot meet the deficiencies of Lewis, Kolom and/or Prevorsek et al., and there is nothing to suggest the combination.

Claims 14-15, 18 and 19 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Lewis in view of Kolom and Prevorsek et al., as applied to claims 13 and 17 above, and further in view of Gettle et al. (U.S. 5,225,622). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection and request its withdrawal for the reasons that follow.

Claims 14-15, 18 and 19 are all container assemblies that include the limitations of claim 1, and therefore the discussion previously set forth with respect to Lewis, Kolom and Prevorsek et al. are applicable here. Gettle et al. indeed teaches the use of pressure attenuating media one of which can be an aqueous foam. Nothing in Gettle et al, however, teaches or suggests the use of same in combination with a container assembly having an outer constraining band that is interrupted yet held together with the loops and connecting pin(s) of Applicants' claimed invention.

Claims 31-33, 35-43 and 46-49 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Morrison (U.S. 3,093,259) in view of Prevorsek et al. Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection and request its withdrawal for the following reasons.

Morrison is cited by the Examiner as disclosing Applicants' claimed device except for the band and pin material. This is not so. Morrison states at column 2, lines 24-26, that the eyelets (akin to Applicants' loops) are attached to the panel block. This means that the eyelets are not integral with the surface panels to be connected, as required by Applicants' claims. There is therefore no motivation to combine this reference with Prevorsek et al., which only teaches use of the high strength material for use in the container surfaces, and also fails to mention integral loops.

Claims 44 and 45 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Morrison in view of Prevorsek et al., as applied to claim 39

above, and further in view of Gettle et al. Applicants traverse this rejection and respectfully request its withdrawal for the reasons that follow.

Claims 44 and 45 depend directly and indirectly, respectively, from claim 39, and therefore, the discussion of Morrison in View of Prevorsek et al. as it applies to the rejection of claim 39 is applicable here as well. It is agreed that Gettle et al. teaches the use of pressure attenuating media one of which can be an aqueous foam. Nothing in Gettle et al, however, teaches or suggests the use of same in combination with a container assembly having a cover and walls attached by pins connecting loops integral with the associated cover and walls and requiring fiber lengths aligned in the hoop direction of the loops.

Claim 50 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Morrison in view of Prevorsek et al., as applied to claim 39 above, and further in view of Sholl. Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection on the basis of the discussion of Morrison in view of Prevorsek et al. as applied to claim 39 above, and further in view of the discussion of Sholl as applied to claims 7 and 24 above.

Claim 51 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kolom in view of Sholl. Applicants respectfully disagree. Kolom teaches hinge knuckles connected by a pin. Sholl, however, teaches a flexible member for connecting latch members. It is respectfully submitted that there is no motivation to combine these references since the function of the connecting members is different. Applicants therefore respectfully request the withdrawal of this rejection.

Claim 52 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kolom in view of Prevorsek et al. Applicants respectfully disagree and request withdrawal of the rejection. Kolom teaches a container assembly. Prevorsek et al. teaches the use of fibrous material to form rigid composite panels. There is absolutely nothing to suggest that the fibrous material of Prevorsek et al. would be appropriate for the Kolom container assembly hinge knuckles.

In view of the foregoing amendment and discussion, it is respectfully submitted that the present claims 1-52 are now in condition for allowance.

Applicants respectfully request that they be passed to issue. Should there be any unresolved issues regarding this application, Examiner Eloshway is invited to contact the undersigned attorney at the telephone number shown below.

Respectfully submitted,  
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